

What is park classification?

No one park can be all things to all people. Accordingly, to provide a diversity of recreation experiences, different park environments are required. Distinctive recreation experiences and park environments are provided through six classes of parks.

All Provincial Parks in Ontario fall into one of these classes:

Wilderness Parks

Wilderness Parks are substantial areas where the forces of nature are permitted to function freely and where visitors travel by non-mechanized means and experience expansive solitude, challenge, and personal integration with nature.

Nature Reserves

Nature Reserves are areas selected to represent the distinctive natural habitats and landforms of the Province, and are protected for educational purposes and as gene pools for research to benefit present and future generations.

Historical Parks

Historical Parks are areas selected to represent the distinctive historical resources of the Province in open space settings, and are protected for interpretive, educational and research purposes.

Natural Environment Parks

Natural Environment Parks incorporate outstanding recreational landscapes with representative natural features and historical resources to provide high quality recreational and educational experiences.

Waterway Parks

Waterway Parks incorporate outstanding recreational water routes with representative natural features and historical resources to provide high quality recreational and educational experiences.

Recreation Parks

Recreation Parks are areas which support a wide variety of outdoor recreation opportunities for large numbers of people in attractive surroundings.

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This brochure describes Ontario's Provincial Park Policy. The policy was approved by the provincial government in May 1978 and it provides a basis for planning and management decisions affecting the Provincial Park System.

This brochure answers four basic questions:

- What are Provincial Parks?
- What do Provincial Parks try to achieve?
- What principles guide their management?
- What is park classification?

Protection

Recreation

Heritage Appreciation

Tourism

Permanence

Distinctiveness

Representation

What are Provincial Parks?

Provincial Parks are areas of land and water managed for the benefit of present and future generations and dedicated to the people of Ontario and others who may use them for their healthful enjoyment and appreciation.

What do Provincial Parks try to achieve?

Goal of the Provincial Park system

To provide a variety of outdoor recreation opportunities, and to protect provincially significant natural, cultural, and recreational environments, in a system of Provincial Parks.

Objectives of the Provincial Park system

To protect provincially significant elements of the natural and cultural landscape of Ontario.

To provide outdoor recreation opportunities ranging from high-intensity day use to low-intensity wilderness experiences.

To provide opportunities for exploration and appreciation of the outdoor natural and cultural heritage of Ontario.

To provide Ontario's residents and out-of-province visitors with opportunities to discover and experience the distinctive regions of the Province.

What principles guide management of the Provincial Park system?

The Provincial Park system is dedicated for all time to the present and future generations of the people of Ontario for their healthful enjoyment and appreciation.

Provincial Parks provide a distinctive range of quality outdoor recreation experiences many of which cannot be provided in other types of parks; for example, wilderness travel and appreciation.

Provincial Parks are established to secure for posterity representative features of Ontario's natural and cultural heritage. Wherever possible the best representations of our heritage will be included in the park system.

Variety

Accessibility

Coordination

System

Classification

Zoning

The Provincial Park system provides a wide variety of outdoor recreation opportunities, and protected natural and cultural landscapes and features.

The benefits of the Provincial Park system will be distributed as widely as possible geographically and as equitably as possible socially so that they are accessible to all Ontario residents.

The Provincial Parks system will be managed in such a way as to be complementary to, rather than competitive with, the private sector and other public agencies.

Individual Provincial Parks contribute to the overall objectives of the Provincial Parks system. All objectives may not be met in each park. The park system, rather than individual parks, provides the diversity of experiences and landscapes which are sought.

No individual park can be all things to all people. Park classification organizes Ontario's Provincial Parks into broad categories each of which has particular purposes and characteristics as well as distinctive planning, management and visitor services policies.

Ontario's Provincial Parks are zoned on the basis of resource significance and recreational potential. Several types of zones ensure that users get the most out of individual parks. Planning and management policies appropriate to each zone type are applied consistently throughout the park system.